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their village life, and, as in most other Bantu societies, the common, and sometimes the essential way of fulfilling social obligations. Beer is the present of honour between kinsmen. It is carried to chiefs as tribute, used to reward labour, or given as an offering to spirits. Nowadays, it may be one of the few ways by which a woman, left deserted by her husband, can make money for clothes.[1] Men cultivate extra ground in order to have enough millet for brewing. Abundance of beer is the glory of a commoner's hospitality, or a chief's court. Without it tribal councils cannot be held, and marriage or initiation ceremonies do not take place. For all these reasons it is impossible to describe the physical effects of native beer-drinking without knowing the part it plays in the Bemba's whole social life. *Ubwalwa* is served in big calabashes holding about 2 or 3 gallons, or in disused petrol tins. It consists of a thick brown sludge to which hot water is added constantly throughout the evening so that the brew gets gradually weaker and weaker.[2] It is drunk through a hollow reed two or three gulps at a time. It is a cloudy fluid, often full of gritty particles, with a clear sharp taste not unlike the bitter flavour of English beer. Most natives become positively lyrical as to its qualities. They say it makes them rejoice (*ukusansamuka*) and that it warms their hearts (*ukuka/yo mutima*)—the ordinary phrase used for getting excited and also angry. Old councillors at the chief's court who have become used to a regular supply of beer, complain bitterly if they are deprived of it. They say that it is bad for them to eat 'cold food', i.e. ordinary meals, and that they need something to 'burn their stomachs just there' (with a hand laid on the spot), and in fact beer must be much easier to digest in old age than most other Bemba foods.

Beer is recognized as making a man more talkative, liable to quarrel, or indulge in illicit love-making, and men whose hearts get hot quickly, to repeat the native phrase, are avoided at beer-drinks, if possible, because they may involve their friends in legal liabilities. I have even heard of cases where Bemba refused to marry into families with a reputation for becoming excitable when drunk. But drunkenness itself is not despised. In fact the drunkard

[1] The sale of beer is illegal in this district, but it is practically impossible to prevent the trading of small quantities.

[2] In samples taken at the beginning and at the end of an evening respectively, Dr. Widdowson found that the alcohol content varied from 4·44 per cent. to 2·10 per cent. (I am indebted to Mr. Douglas Miller of the Education Department for dispatching these samples.)

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July or August—I should say that beer was brewed in most villages about once a week. In the subsequent months the supply would be less frequent, and during the scarce season at the end of the rains *ubwalwa* would only be found regularly at a chief's court. If asked how often a woman should brew a year, the answer was anything from four to six times, which, reckoning about 80 lb. of millet to one brew, would mean an annual expenditure of about 400 lb. of millet on beer.[1] Ten brews in one year was described to me as excessive, with the added criticism: 'That is a woman who likes beer.' But there is no doubt that in villages near white settlements, people brew much more often than this because of the profits they hope to make from the sale, and they even buy grain for the purpose.[2]

On any one night, the amount drunk per head is limited by the rules of social etiquette. Under village conditions drinking follows a definite order of precedence. The guests usually arrive between four and five in the afternoon, after the day's work is done. They enter one by one shouting: '*Hodi*?—May I come in?' at the door and crouch on the newly cleaned floor side by side. Water is bubbling in a big pot over the fire in charge of the woman of the house, and the calabash, or sometimes more than one, stands ready on the floor, for water may not be poured on the drink (*ukubika bwalwa*) until the honoured guests are assembled. The owner then rinses out his mouth with water and spits on the ground calling a blessing of the ancestral spirits (*ukupala matr*) for a peaceful beer-drink. He then hands round the drinking reed ceremoniously to the eldest man present, who sucks the first draught, pronounces on the quality of the beer, and hands the reed back to the host. Drinking then follows in order of age and status. The old men near the calabash talk and take long pulls at the *ubwalwa* in turn, while the elder women, if present, sit farther off, and rise occasionally to take a couple of drinks and then return to their place. Young

[1] Out of an annual production of roughly 2,400 lb. of grain per family (from U. Moffat's report to the Diet Committee of N. Rhodesia, 1933). It must be remembered, however, that the woman does not usually cook on the same day as she provides beer and that she is brewing for the whole village and not for her household alone.

[2] At Kasaka village during the months succeeding the harvest (1933) out of 11 women, 3 had brewed once; 2 twice; 2 three times, 2 four times, 1 five times, and 1 six times. In the figures collected by Mrs. Gore-Browne 13 villages had brewed on an average 10 times each in 6 months from June to January, using 9,400 lb. of millet, but figures are difficult to verify and the prohibition on the sale of beer makes women reluctant to tell the truth on this point.

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drying—a process which is believed to destroy the vitamin content of vegetables.[1]

Gourds, fruit, &c. Gourds may be kept a few months, but not pumpkins. I once saw a small temporary granary of *mpundu* fruit, but I think this is very rare.

Roots, mushrooms, &c. Sweet potatoes, mushrooms, and caterpillars are preserved by a process of parboiling (*ukufubula*) and subsequent drying in the sun. These foods are used during the hunger months but are declared to be insipid.

Cassava is not stored, but eaten from the beds as wanted.

Meat and fish are not preserved in large quantities, because the supply is very scanty, but in each case the raw flesh is smoke-dried over the open fire. There is some trade in dried fish preserved in this way.

Granaries and Storing Vessels

The approach to a Bemba village is usually up a narrow, overgrown path, winding through untidy beds of pumpkins, beans, or maize. On the outskirts, the first buildings that catch the eye are the village granaries—lath and plaster cylinders with thatched roofs ranged in an irregular circle round the dwelling places. These grain bins are of varying sizes, but measure usually about 10 feet high and 20 feet in circumference, and are raised on uprights about a foot from the ground. Each granary stands as near as possible to its owner's hut, the majority round the outside of the village, but a few scattered here and there inside. To European eyes, they are often untidy and inefficient looking constructions. The supports are sometimes unevenly placed, so that the whole structure seems to tilt to one side. The walls may be whitewashed and painted with red, yellow, and black earth, but more often they are just roughly daubed with clay which cracks in the sun. The grass used for thatching is never cut evenly or bound round the edge, and therefore hangs in wisps of different lengths. But these granaries, though they do not conform to our artistic standards, are nevertheless the measure by which the prosperity of a village is very largely judged. Many huts with few grain bins mean few adult male householders in the community. Cracking walls, or

[1] Cf. the statement that the women of Nigeria dry their leaves in the shade in order to preserve their food value, quoted E. B. Worthington, 'Food and Nutrition of the African Native', *Africa*, vol. ix, 1936, p. 158.

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any type of exchange of goods that actually existed in pre-European days, as apart from the joint consumption and pooling of food within the different kinship units. Formerly it seems clear that, except for food brought to the capital, the only goods which circulated about the country were articles such as ironwork—chiefly hoes—brought from the surrounding tribes, salt carried from the local salt-pans near Mpika, and the various objects such as guns and cloth traded by caravans of Arabs. In most of these cases the goods were brought to the chiefs—whether given as tribute by conquered peoples or fetched by parties of his men. Commoners occasionally went to the Lunda area to fetch hoes, or to the salt-pans to bring back balls of salt.[1] Fish was carried as tribute from the bigger rivers or fishing pools, but probably not traded to commoners to any extent.

The environmental conditions of the Bemba account to some extent for their poor development of trade, since conditions are, generally speaking, so uniform in this area that there is little reason for one district to exchange goods with another. In the neighbouring swamp area, on the other hand, the Bisa, Ushi, Unga, and other tribelets have control of great supplies of fish, not possessed by the other plateau natives, and they live on small islands each of which seems to lack one essential commodity—whether it is firewood, clay for pots, tall trees for canoe-building, soil for millet for brewing, &c.; and here the people, unlike the Bemba, live by trade with each other and with the European. But besides their environment the history of the Bemba probably limits their trading interests. A dominant tribe can get what it wants from subject peoples and an autocratic chief can monopolize such commodities as ivory, salt, or Arab goods so that the commoner does not reckon to trade with them at all. The Bemba concepts of wealth just described also affect their desire to barter or sell, and make it difficult for them to do so.

But, whatever the reason, the Bemba of to-day have no tradition of commerce, no habit of exchange, and as yet no abilities in this direction. They barter very little and have taken poor advantage of the Government's recent efforts to introduce markets at Kasama, Mpika, and Chinsali.[2] Without roads suitable for motor transport

[1] I am not clear what these parties took as goods to trade with, but heard of particular cases where men worked for the hoes they needed.

[2] The Pim Report [Report of the Commission appointed to inquire into the

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such markets could hardly develop to a large extent, since the villages are widely dispersed, and a woman bringing in food to sell is limited by the weight she can carry on her head, i.e. about 50 lb.[1] But nevertheless it seems clear that the Bemba differ strikingly from other tribes in their ability to take advantage of modern methods of trade. For instance, no hawkers licences were issued in the Kasama district in 1937, whereas fifty-five were issued among the cattle-owning Mambwe round Abercorn.[2]

The types of trade that I observed among the Bemba in 1934 were as follows: (*a*) The occasional hawking of such objects as snuff, baskets, mats, or fish by members of surrounding tribes, e.g. the Nsenga from the Loangwa valley, who are great traders; (*b*) occasional expeditions made by the Bemba to other districts to fetch supplies of something they need, e.g. fish from the swamps; (*c*) sporadic exchanges of food for money or goods between local natives during the hunger season; (*d*) barter or sale of food to natives permanently living in white employment and therefore often without their own gardens; (*e*) the barter or sale of craft goods such as axes, baskets, mats, &c.; (*f*) the sale of grain to Europeans. Except in the case of the sales to town natives or to Europeans, none of these forms of exchange is organized or even continuous. The traffic appears to consist of a series of isolated acts which have little reference to previous transactions of the kind, and are not governed by any recognized system of comparative values.

Thus in the remoter villages the people will tell you, 'A man came through the village yesterday and sold us snuff—a lump like this (shown by a gesture)—for an eating basket of grain', and it is clear that this was a single instance and that nothing like a regular schedule of prices or rates of exchange governed the transaction. The hawker may not appear again for a year or two. The expeditions made by the Bemba themselves to surrounding territories have something entirely casual about them. I have seen parties of young men leaving a Bemba village to 'buy fish' among the Bisa of the swamps. Such groups would go off in holiday spirits,

Financial and Economic Position of N. Rhodesia. Colonial 145], 1938, p. 28, comments on the poor success of these markets; and cf. also the figures as to the number of native-owned stores in the district as 6 only in 1935, p. 53. Native Affairs Report of the N. R. Government, 1935.

[1] The lack of a smaller coin than the 3*d*. bits formerly prevented native trade developing, but the Government has introduced cupro-nickel 1½*d*. bits since 1934.

[2] Ibid., 1937, p. 53.